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October 17, 2013

In *Beloved*, written by Toni Morrison, Sethe is strongly disturbed by her past experiences as a slave and her past crimes. Sethe attempted to kill her children and succeeded in killing her baby girl, whom she named Beloved. With many traumatic experiences in her past, Sethe live a sad depressed life in I24 with her only family left, Denver, until the appearances of Paul D. and a mysterious girl, Beloved. Paul D. shares the same past memories as a slave with Sethe and Sethe finds comforts in talking and being with him. With Beloved, Sethe talks about many of her forgotten pasts and confronts them herself. Sethe slowly accepts what happened to her. Beloved’s whole existence relies on Sethe’s affection and attention, helping Sethe cope with her pasts, but as Sethe slowly accepted her past, Beloved’s existence is endangered.

Although at first Beloved seemed mysterious, we later know that she is the ghost of Sethe’s dead baby girl, Beloved. In chapter 8 when Beloved and Denver were playing and talking, Denver knew the exact identity of Beloved but out of jealously, Denver asked Beloved to not tell Sethe who she is. “Don’t let Ma’am know who you are. Please, you hear?” (89) It may seem like that Beloved existed in front of Sethe to have revenge on Sethe for murdering her but Beloved still love Sethe very much. Beloved helps bring up many hidden memories of Sethe and live in the attention of Sethe.

Sethe felt motherly and touched when she first encountered Beloved. “Sethe was deeply touched by her sweet name; the remembrance of glittering headstone made her feel especially kindly toward her.” (63) Sethe felt a connection with Beloved in remembrance of her dead child. Slowly, Beloved helps Sethe remember important pasts. Beloved helped Sethe remember her wedding to Halle by starting a conversation asking “Where your diamonds?” (69). Sethe remembered her marriage to Halle and her past life as a slave, where she has no freedom and can’t even have a wedding. Beloved absorbs the stories in and “it became a way to feed her”. (69) Beloved helps Sethe remember many past events she didn’t have deep memories of.

Since the beginning of the novel, there was not much talk about Sethe’s parents. Even Denver knows nothing. “This was the first time she had heard anything about her mother’s mother.” (73) Denver never heard about her mother’s mother until Beloved asked Sethe regarding her mother. “Your mother she never fix up your hair?” (72) Sethe herself doesn’t remember her mother well. After Beloved asked, Sethe remembered the tragedy of her mother’s death. Beloved helps Sethe remember pasts and loves to follow Sethe and stay close to her. Beloved fed off of Sethe’s story and attention. Without Sethe’s attention, Beloved’s body will slowly disappear. As Sethe shares past experiences with Paul D. and spent more time with him, Beloved is fearful of Paul D. taking Sethe away from her. As Sethe spent less time with Beloved, Beloved is slowly breaking apart. “…pulled out a back tooth…Next would be her arm, her hand, a toe. Pieces of her would drop maybe one at a time, maybe all at once.” (157) As Beloved helped Sethe remember and accept her past, Beloved will slowly disappear and Sethe will be free of her past and accept a new future.

Question: As Beloved ask Sethe questions regarding her pasts, do you think Beloved asked those question to help Sethe to conquer her pasts or is Beloved hoping the past can hurt and punish Sethe as revenge?